

# Valley Forge

National Historical Park



## JOB ANNOUNCEMENT Youth Conservation Corps Program

### Why Join the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)?

The YCC promotes natural resource conservation by America's youth and prepare participants for the ultimate responsibility of managing resources for the American people. The program:

- Accomplishes important conservation work in Valley Forge National Historical Park
- Provides youth with gainful employment
- Develops understanding and appreciation of the nation's natural environment and heritage.

Crew members learn work ethics, how to relate to peers and supervisors, and how to build lasting cultural bridges with youth from other backgrounds.



### Typical Duties

The YCC Program at Valley Forge centers on the control of non-native, invasive plants and animals in the park. These species are a primary threat to the natural diversity of the park ecosystem. Approximately 40% of work time is spent in fields and forest removing non-native plants such as mile-a-minute weed and oriental bittersweet vines. An additional 40% of work time is spent in a stream catching and removing invasive crayfish. One day per week is dedicated to environmental education and includes field trips to other local areas of interest as well as presentations by park staff. The YCC also helps park partners on other conservation projects such as trails and tree planting.

### Eligibility and Selection



The YCC is open to young adults, 15-18 years old. No previous experience is required. Selection is by random drawing and targets a ratio of 50% female to 50% male crew members. If selected, crew members **MUST**:

- 1) Be available to work the full eight weeks and be physically capable of performing the work described above.
- 2) must be at least 15 years of age and not have reached age 19 during the term of employment.
- 3) Undergo a background check that may include fingerprinting at the government's expense.
- 4) With a parent or guardian, meet with NPS staff during the work week to complete employment paperwork (participants age 18 may do this unaccompanied). This includes required documentation to demonstrate United States citizenship or permanent residency. Dates: 4/20 from 8:30 - 10:00; 4/21 from 3:00 - 4:30; 4/24 from 8:30 - 10:00; from 4/26 from 3:00 - 4:30
- 5) If under age 18, obtain and submit a work permit by May 31.
- 6) Have a checking or savings account in the name of the participant.

### Program Dates

Monday, June 26, 2017 through Friday, August 18, 2016.

### Applications and Deadline

For applications go to:

<http://www.nps.gov/vafo/getinvolved/workwithus.htm>

Completed applications must be received by **March 31, 2017**.

**Work Location,  
Schedule, Salary,  
and Leave**

YCC crew members report to the park each morning. Work days are Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 4:00pm (40 hours per week). Crew members must provide their own transportation to and from the park. The park is served by SEPTA bus routes 125 and 139. Transportation during work hours is provided by the NPS. Crew members earn the prevailing minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. YCC do not earn paid leave. Under certain circumstances, the NPS can grant unpaid leave to accommodate illness and/or occasional vacation days.

**YCC Program  
Expectations**

By submitting an application to join YCC, you agree to comply with the following expectations of employment. Failure to do so will be grounds for termination. YCC crew members:

- Are required to wear the provided uniform and safety equipment at all times as directed by the supervisor.
- Will arrive at work on time and ready for daily assignments.
- Will follow all rules and regulations required of National Park Service staff.
- Will follow instructions given by supervisors.
- Will work safely and respectfully with other YCC crew members.
- Will participate in all aspects of the program, including work activities and environmental education.
- Will contribute their best to the success of the program.

**Physical Demands  
and Environmental  
Hazards**

YCC crew members perform hard work in an outdoor setting—rain or shine. Physical demands and environmental hazards may include:

- Using hand tools such as shovels, hand saws, and pruning shears
- Lifting up to 50 pounds of weight
- Dragging vegetation and debris such as branches to a central location
- Digging, pulling, and chopping
- Working in the sun and summer heat
- Hiking or working on rough terrain, steep slopes and in creeks
- Possible exposure to insects (e.g. bee stings), ticks, Lyme Disease, poison ivy, and encountering wildlife such as snakes

Park staff emphasize a safe working environment, conduct daily safety briefings, and provide sunscreen, poison ivy treatment, and DEET-based insect repellent (if requested and approved by parent or guardian).

**Mail or Email completed application to:**

Valley Forge National Historical Park  
Attention: Natural Resources - YCC  
1400 North Outer Line Drive  
King of Prussia, PA 19406  
Amy\_Ruhe@nps.gov

**Questions?**

Amy Ruhe  
610-783-1036  
Amy\_Ruhe@nps.gov

**In the words of 2010 YCC crew member, Erin Clark:** At the beginning of my 8 weeks, I told my parents I was almost like a glorified weed puller, but as I learned about the different invasive species we were controlling I started to take pride in my work. Every rusty crayfish that we caught and every strand of mile-a-minute weed that we pulled saved a native crayfish or another native plant from being overrun or killed. Our work made a difference. Overall, this summer was one I will never forget. Work was balanced with enjoyment and new things to see, explore, and understand. I loved the people I worked with and am thankful for this opportunity. So next time you look on the side of the road and see teenagers pulling weeds and think 'glorified weed puller,' take another look and see we are really preserving the beauty of nature and history – we are preserving us.